

January 21, 2020: National Webinar

Recognizing and Responding to Traumatized Children, Adolescents, and Adults – What Courts CAN Do and Why

When an individual appears in Court, the signs of childhood trauma are often evident but can be easily missed by judges and court personnel. On this webinar, Judge Lynn Tepper (retired) describes the indicators of trauma and provides tools to create a trauma-informed environment in the courthouse. Simple steps to avoid re-traumatization are shared, as well as creative ideas for building resiliency and hope for those in the court system. Judge Tepper also shares the nationally renowned Bench Guides and innovative education tools that support collaboration and transformation in Court.

As a result of attending this webinar:

1. Participants will learn what the indicators of trauma are and how to respond in a trauma-informed manner.
2. Participants will better understand changes that can be made in Courtrooms and Courthouses that will avoid re-traumatization and encourage healing.
3. Participants will learn how to educate all stakeholders on the impact of trauma in ways that can change the trajectory of those who appear in Court.

About the Presenter

Judge Lynn Tepper retired 12/31/18 after 30 years as a Circuit Judge in Florida's 6th Judicial Circuit. She has a J.D. from Stetson University, College of Law and her B.A. from Bard College, N.Y. Her court was one of six sites in U.S. with a model NCJFCJ, "Project ONE" Court. Her "Early Childhood Court", was a Demonstration Site with ZERO TO THREE.

She teaches, writes & speaks nationally on Trauma-informed Courts, ACEs, Early Childhood. She's been published within Florida and the U.S. She appeared on Nightline, Oprah Winfrey, CNN's Crier & Co., Montel Williams & WEDU's Human Trafficking "Too Close to Home".

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Recognizing and Responding to Traumatized Children, Adolescents, and Adults: What Courts CAN Do and Why

Judge Lynn Tepper



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Your Host Today

Casey Gwinn, Esq.
President
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International

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Thank You to the Office on Violence Against Women



Laura Rogers
Acting Director

Kevin Sweeney
Program Manager

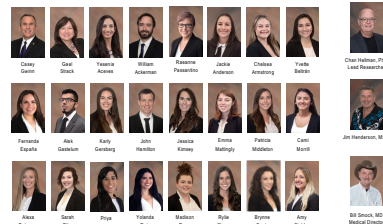
Thank you for making this presentation possible!

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Your Presenter Today

Judge Lynn Tepper
(retired)

Former Circuit Judge in Florida's 6th Judicial District



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Recognizing and Responding to Traumatized Children, Adolescents and Adults: What Courts CAN do and Why

Lynn Tepper, Circuit Judge, Retired
6th Judicial Circuit, Pasco County, FL

ALLIANCE for HOPE INTERNATIONAL Webinar
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Recognizing Traumatized Individuals

INDICATORS OF TRAUMA:

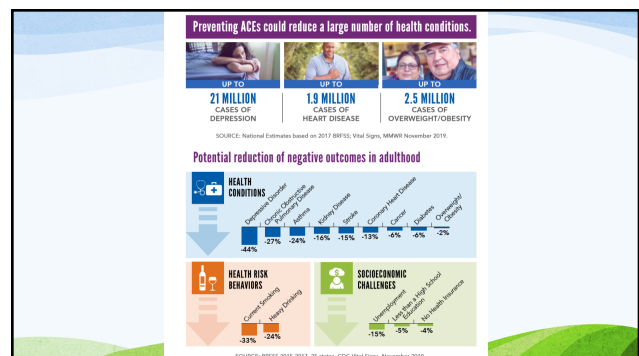
Appearance or complaining of:

- Exhausted: Night shift? Or up late with police?
- Tired: No safe place to sleep due to homelessness or being kept awake by someone who intimidates and controls or threatens them
- Health Issues: Diabetes? Heart? Weight? COPD? Cancer? Other?

Circumstances that bring them to court:

- Domestic Violence, Delinquency, Truancy, Child Welfare, Mental Health issues, Explosive Violence, Substance Abuse issue

<https://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/ACEs/>



Adverse Childhood Experiences Often Lead to Risky Behaviors Which Become Societal Problems

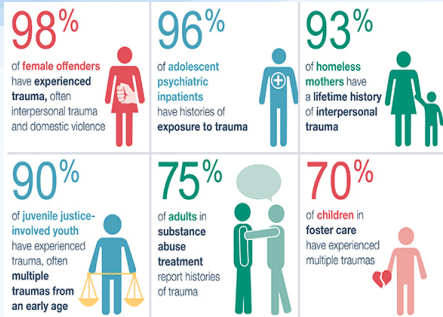


Academic Mental Health Maltreatment Addictions Crime

Our most common public health problems (that are system problems) are:

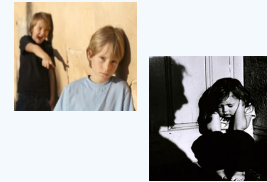
- Unconscious attempts to gain relief from problems that are lost in time
- Protected by shame, secrecy, and social taboos against exploring certain realms of human experience
- As a result, we often end up trying to treat someone's solution

Dr. Vincent Felitti, co-investigator of the ACE Study



Some types of potentially traumatic victimization include:

- Sexual assault or abuse
- Physical assault or abuse
- Neglect
- Emotional abuse
- Verbal abuse
- Bullying
- Dating violence
- Witnessing murder
- Community violence
- Hate crimes
- Loss of home
- Witnessing family violence
- Repeated out-of-home placement

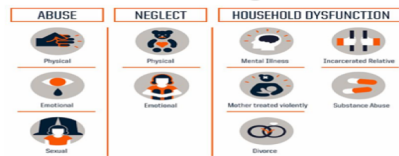


Adverse Childhood Experiences Study (ACES)

The largest study of its kind to examine the health and social effects of adverse childhood experiences over the lifespan.

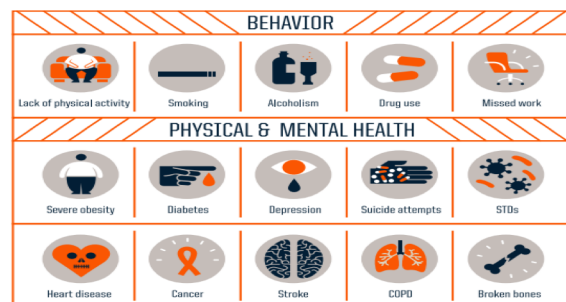
What is an ACE Score? A self-reported count of adverse experiences that occurred during the first 18 years of life including:

Understanding ACEs

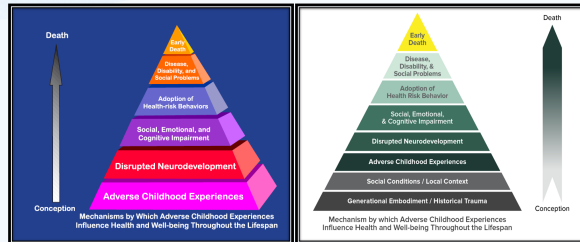


To download the ACE questionnaire, visit: [acestudy.org/ace_score](https://www.acestudy.org/ace_score)

Possible Risk Outcomes:



ACEs Influence Throughout the Lifespan



Are we missing the signs of childhood trauma in the individuals who appear in Court?

Behaviors of traumatized individuals often are precisely the behaviors that may lead the Court or court personnel to respond in a way that will:

- Increase the disruption
- Deepen confusion
- Reduce focus
- Decrease understanding
- Delay the proceedings
- Re-traumatize them

Likely, these “adults [are] experiencing toxic stress that just doesn’t let up

- not...able to find a job, or
 - not having enough to eat
 - or a place to live—
- can feel overwhelming, like a heavy burden. Much like a truck that’s been loaded down with too much weight so it can’t move forward.....”

<https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/what-we-can-do-about-toxic-stress/>

- For them “...these difficult circumstances can
- make it challenging to get through life,
 - make you feel like you can only plan one day at a time,
 - make it like you’re struggling to follow through, or
 - having difficulty staying calm
 - make you feel numb—like you just don’t care about anything—or
 - like you can’t control your emotions.”

<https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/what-we-can-do-about-toxic-stress/>

The People in court are “wired” to Fight, Flee or Freeze



Brain Response to Fear



Once you are safe, all the brain parts are designed to automatically shut off and everything goes back to normal.



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With Chronic Stress, the Body Stays on High Alert

Cortisol and adrenaline continue to be released, causing the heart to race and blood pressure to elevate which **overstresses the heart**.

Prefrontal cortex continues to be shut down **repressing judgment, thinking, and executive functioning** so that every situation is processed by the **survival brain**.

Cortisol, which was useful in the short term, now continues to **disrupt clear thinking, sleep, and appetite** and triggers body to crave high sugar, high fat foods (**causing insomnia & obesity**).

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Stuck on "ON":



- ANXIETY
- PANIC
- HYPERACTIVITY
- RESTLESSNESS
- EXAGGERATED STARTLE
- HYPERVIGILANCE (Constant worry about possible danger)
- SLEEPLESSNESS, SLEEP TROUBLES, NIGHTMARES, FEAR of FALLING ASLEEP
- CHRONIC PAIN (Headaches, stomach aches)
- HOSTILITY/RAGE & ANGRY FEELINGS
- EMOTIONAL FLOODING
- INABILITY TO RELAX
- DIGESTIVE PROBLEMS (Loss of appetite, refusal to eat)

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OR Stuck on "OFF"

- DEPRESSION
- FLAT AFFECT
- LETHARGY
- DEADNESS
- EXHAUSTION
- CHRONIC FATIGUE
- DISORIENTATION
- DISCONNECTION
- DISSOCIATION
- COMPLEX SYNDROMES
- PAIN
- LOW BLOOD PRESSURE
- POOR DIGESTION

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Threatening Events Are Imprinted on the Survival Brain



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People in Court may be in "Survival Mode", which means their:

Emotional Brain Processes Threats Before the Thinking Brain Gets A Chance

(Streeck-Fischer & van der Kolk, 2000)

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But we expect those who come into our Courtrooms to:

- Be quiet
- Be respectful
- Be patient
- Follow directions
- Complete complex case plans
- Follow multiple oral instructions

IF YOU UNDERSTAND THE IMPACT OF ACEs, INSTEAD YOU WILL EXPECT...

33 <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/what-we-can-do-about-toxic-stress/>

The behaviors you see may be the result of trauma:

You might see

- A Petitioner in a DV Injunction case
- A Party in a Family Law case
- A Parent in a Child Welfare case
- A Youth in a Delinquency case that:

Shows Symptoms of Trauma:

- Guarded and anxious
- Difficult to re-direct, rejects support
- Highly emotionally reactive
- Or
- Perceives that danger is everywhere
 - Entering the Courthouse, Courtroom, going to Providers
- Unable to trust others

(Streeck-Fischer & van der Kolk, 2000)

The behaviors you see may be the result of trauma:

You might see

- A Respondent in a DV Injunction case
- A Party in a Family Law case
- A Parent in a Child Welfare case
- A Youth in a Delinquency case
- A Defendant that:

- Makes the same mistakes over & over
- Holds onto grievances
- Has difficulty with change & transitions
- Has difficulty "calming down" after outbursts
- Is:
 - Difficult to re-direct, rejects support
 - Highly physically reactive

(Streeck-Fischer & van der Kolk, 2000)

Why? What does Trauma have to do with these behaviors?

Experiencing Adverse Childhood Experiences, (ACEs), [including racism, community violence & poverty], without supportive adults can cause TOXIC STRESS.

Poor Executive Functioning results from the impact of toxic stress which can weaken the architecture of the developing brain (the prefrontal lobe), with long-term consequences for learning, behavior, and both physical and mental health.

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Toxic Stress impacts the part of the brain that controls:

- Working memory
- Inhibitory control
- Mental flexibility

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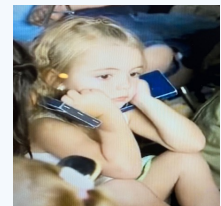
Which translates to:

Difficulty

- Concentrating and learning
- Understanding consequences
- Making decisions
- Setting goals and make plans

Impaired Inhibitory Control

- Suppressing inappropriate behaviors
- Resisting impulsive actions
- Getting along with others AND



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The Inability of:

- Focusing on multiple streams of information
- Revising plans
- Adjusting actions or reactions in changing situations

For children & adolescents in Court we need to recognize that Stress Compromises Learning & Self Regulation

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Trauma Symptoms (often mistreated as ADHD) of a child are:



- Failing to understand directions
- Overreacting to teachers and peers
- Failing to connect cause and effect
- Aggression
- Zoning out
- Lack of focus
- Don't stay on task
- Impulsive
- Can't sit still
- Lose control of emotions
- Easily distracted
- Easily frustrated
- Don't follow instructions
- Poor coping skills

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Executive Functioning Challenges Often Mistaken as Attitude or Motivation Problems

Children with a history of stress and trauma default to survival skills rather than executive functioning skills.

Refusing to do what adults tell you to do isn't a bad attitude or defiance but an inability to manage anger or strong feelings & poorly regulated stress response system. The whole slew of self-regulation issues can usually be traced to impaired executive function in early childhood.

RED FLAGS of Trauma/ACES

Telltale signs of ACES (by LT)

CIRCUMSTANCES OF CASE	Domestic violence, physical punishment
LIVING CIRCUMSTANCE	Hazardous conditions, no utilities, on the streets, in a shed, with friends or relative, in their car
STATUS	Runaway, jail, prison, mental health or substance abuse facility
REPORTED HOTLINE HISTORY	A parent's childhood or sibling's history. Adopted? Permanent guardianship/relative caregiver? Sibling's locations (jail, dead, mental health issues)
INDICATED & UNFOUNDED	Give them weight; unfounded doesn't = untrue
TYPES OF CHARGES, FREQUENCY	Multi-batteries included on LEO or staff; sex offenses (a victim of child sex abuse?)
SCHOOL HISTORY	Graduate from HS? Suspensions/expulsions

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RED FLAGS of Trauma/ACES *con't*

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE	Victim or Offender
MENTAL HEALTH HISTORY	Age, Multi Diagnosis: ADHD, PTSD, Bi-polar, Anxiety, Explosive Disorder, Hospitalizations
MULTI-SEXUAL PARTNERS	Unknown fathers? Children who were product of rape?
TATOOS	Branding by a trafficker?
PHYSICAL APPEARANCE & EMOTION	Aggressive, antsy, no eye contact, hunched, exhausted
PHYSICAL HEALTH	Diabetes, Heart Disease, Cancer, Auto-Immune Diseases, Sores
DRUGS	Marijuana use despite substance abuse counseling
MALES WITH SIGNIFICANT ATTACHMENT TO DOG	A recent study shows male victims of sex abuse cope through a relationship with their dog

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PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	REACTION OF TRAUMA SURVIVOR	TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH
The judge sits behind a desk (or "bench"), and parties sit at a table some distance from the bench.	Feeling separate; isolated; unworthy; afraid.	In some treatment courts, the judge comes out from behind the bench & sits at a table in front.
Parties are required to address the court from their place at the defendant's table.	Fear of authority; inability to communicate clearly, especially if an abuser is in the courtroom.	When practical, ask the party to come close; speak to them beside or right in front of the bench.
Multiple signs instruct participants about what they are <u>not</u> allowed to do.	Feeling intimidated; lack of respect; untrustworthy; treated like a child.	Eliminate all but the most necessary of signs; word those to indicate respect for everyone who reads them.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	REACTION OF TRAUMA SURVIVOR	TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH
A court officer jingles handcuffs while standing behind a participant.	Anxiety; inability to pay attention to what the judge is saying; fear.	Eliminate this type of nonverbal intimidation, especially if no intention of remanding the individual. Tell the court officers <u>not</u> to stand too close. Respect an individual's personal space.
A judge asks a party to explain her behavior or the impact of abuse without acknowledging the impact of the presence of others in the courtroom.	Intimidation or fear of abusers who may be in the courtroom; reluctance to share information in front of family members or others who do not believe them.	Save questions about sensitive issues for when the courtroom is empty or allow the party to approach the bench. If ongoing abuse or intimidation is suspected, engage those people in activities outside the courtroom while the party shares her story.

COURTROOM EXPERIENCE	REACTION OF TRAUMA SURVIVOR	TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH
A court officer handcuffs a party without warning because they had not met the requirements of their agreement with the court and are remanded to jail.	Anxiety about being restrained; fear about what is going to happen.	Tell the individual you intend to remand them. Explain why. Explain what is going to happen and when. (The court officer will walk behind you; you'll be handcuffed, etc.).
A judge remands one individual to jail but not another when they both have done the same things (had a positive drug screen) and they are both in the courtroom at the same time.	Concern about fairness; feeling that someone else is getting special treatment.	Explain why you are doing this: "Sam is new to drug court & this is his first positive screen. We're going to try again to see if the approach we're using can be effective. Carol has had multiple positive drug screens; I'm remanding her to jail because the approach here hasn't been effective in supporting her recovery. I wish I had a better choice, and I hope she won't give up on recovery."

COURTROOM EXPERIENCE	REACTION OF TRAUMA SURVIVOR	TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH
Individuals who are frightened and agitated are required to wait before appearing before the judge.	Increased agitation; anxiety; acting out.	Clearly provide scheduling information so parties know what will be expected of them and when. Prioritize who appears before you and when; be mindful of those who are especially anxious, have the most trouble waiting, and are more likely to act out.
A judge conducts a sidebar conversation with attorneys.	Suspicion, betrayal, shame, fear.	Tell the party what is happening and why: "We have to discuss some issues related to your case. We just need a minute to do it on the side."
A party enters a plea that does not appear to be consistent with the evidence, his or her own description of the event, or in their own best interests.	Memory impairment; confusion about courtroom procedures; inability to process implications of the plea.	Adjourn to allow time for courtroom team to discuss whether and how to accept the plea.

How, why, what can we do to:

- Recognize
- Minimize
- Heal
- Build Resiliency
- Help to thrive
- Give HOPE
- Change the trajectory and avoid returns to court

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Responding to Traumatized Individuals in a trauma-informed manner

Start with getting to and in the door of the Courthouse: **SAFETY**

In Court: Be consistent, trust-worthy, clear & straight forward in directions

Resolving & setting cases: Give people a voice--& listen

Be mindful of their cultural, historical & gender issues

SAMHSA shares this approach:

Key Principles of a Trauma Informed Court Approach

- Safety
- Trustworthiness & Transparency
- Peer Support
- Collaboration & Mutuality
- Empowerment, Voice & Choice
- Cultural, Historical, and Gender Issues

Trauma-Informed Courts make change possible...under precise conditions

- **Getting in the door**
 - *From the people to the physical appearance*
- **Finding your way**
- **Staying safe**
 - *Physically & Emotionally*
- **Meeting the past & the unexpected**
 - *Avoiding re-traumatization*

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A Trauma-Informed Courthouse: inside & out

- **Entering the Courthouse**
 - *Appearance of the courthouse*
 - *Personnel*
- **Waiting areas**
 - *Schedules & coordinating cases*
- **Courtroom: Appearance**
 - *Personnel*
- **Communications in Court**
 - *Allaying fears*
 - *Building trust*
- **Communications out of Court & Community Referrals**
 - *Encouraging candor & engagement*

5

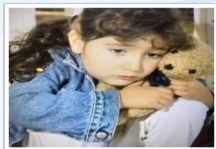
A Trauma-Informed Courthouse: inside

- **Waiting areas**
 - Advance written instructions on how to seek safety *[in DVI's]*
 - From timing to where to wait
 - Bailiffs/guards routinely walking through waiting areas
 - Bailiffs/guards available to seek safety
- **Courtrooms, parties, and attendees**
 - Where parties are seated can avoid re-traumatization
 - Know who is in your courtroom; know who presents a danger
- **Communications in Court**
 - Beware Conduct or Statements by past abusers including parties or participants may trigger an individual

Clear directions and simple courthouse rules



Court Environment



What Hurts:

- Not feeling safe and secure.
- Intimidating bailiffs.

Florida Court's Trauma and Child Development Toolkit



What Helps:

- Advocate for adequate & trauma-trained courthouse **security** in your courtroom.
- Eliminate intimidation.
- Therapy dogs & a non-sterile environment

Courtroom Communication:

Flipping the Script from Adversarial to Therapeutic

- Establish Policies For Court Communications for: Bailiffs, Judges, Court Personnel, Lawyers
- Reduce Fear And Stress Ensure sense of physical & emotional safety
- Avoid re-traumatization
- Provide regular feedback by reflecting & paraphrasing the content:
 "I can see you are confused" or
 "Sounds like you are saying..."
- Build TRUST Same Judge over time & cases



What harms?	What helps?
Thinking or asking, <i>What's wrong with <u>you</u>?</i>	Think and ask, <i>"What has happened <u>to</u> you?"</i> <i>"I see you had some ACEs, how is that affecting your life today?"</i>

Courtroom Communication....

- Inspire HOPE
- Establish Relationships in the Court:
 - Eye Contact
 - Respect
 - Kindness
 - Patience
 - Reassurance
- Empathy
- Acceptance
- Actively Listen
- Remember Them
- Read Filings Before
- Just Listen
- Don't Judge

The one family/one team model can lessen...

- Likelihood of additional trauma due to: **conflicting diagnosis & service interventions**
- Number of times the family may have to **recite painful memories** and events or
- Number of times they must come to Court
- Time for the family & team to **develop trust & build healthy relationships**

[Click here for Florida Rules of Procedure related to coordinating cases.](#)
[Click here for examples of Circuit Administrative Orders related to coordinating cases.](#)

How can you change your handling of families & cases?


- Time certain dockets & appointments: no masses in waiting area.
- Sufficient time scheduled for docket size and matters set. Be mindful of children & youth present in court.
- Quality Screening for ACEs whenever possible.
- Swift & thorough review of test results & reports.
- Ordering tasks that address underlying issues.

More change

- Referral & Access to effective & supportive services to promote positive outcomes & avoid unnecessary stress
- Prevent unnecessary wait times & rescheduling
- All staff & attorneys educated on ACEs, patience and kindness

Be Part of the Solution

- Review all possible sources for past ACEs: Child Welfare invests, Hospitalizations, current circumstances.
- Order prompt TRAUMA/ACEs Assessments be conducted on youth (or adults)
 - Can/Should be done even if in Detention or Out of County Placement
- Use only qualified assessors/doctors (know your community resources). Ask for credentials
- If party connecting with trauma services, order periodic updates to confirm adequacy of services, engagement & progress (may be post-judgment)
- Regular Status Reviews to review progress (Delinquency, Child Welfare, VOPs)
- Be consistent with messages of HOPE and a Path to Promising Future
- Be Patient, Kind and Listen & NEVER LIE

**Do not look on appearance,
look on the heart** 
Change is possible

- Create the ability to meet the needs of our traumatized children and parents
- Create a supportive & educated community, within and outside the courts

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The Solution

HOME | FLORIDA COURTS | RESOURCES & SERVICES | ADMINISTRATION & FUNDING | PUBLICATIONS & STATISTICS

Home | Resources & Services | Office of Court Improvement | Family Courts | Family Court Basics | Family Court Tool Kit: Trauma and Child Development | The Solution

T: 1 800 635 6338
TEXT SIZE PRINT SHARE

Trauma and Child Development

The Problem

The Solution

The Goal

Court Implications

Resources

The Solution

IF:

We accept the findings of the ACE Study, then we accept that certain experiences are major risk factors for the leading causes of illness and death as well as poor quality of life.

AND

IF:

We embrace the Florida Supreme Court's second guiding principle of family court, then we acknowledge that the needs and best interests of children should be the primary consideration of any family court. All persons, whether children or adults, should be treated with objectivity, sensitivity, dignity and respect.

THEN:

We will view the children, youth, and parents who appear in family court through a public health lens, understanding what has happened to them, identifying their needs, and promoting healing and recovery.

...moving from a "sick - well" or "victim - offender" dichotomy to one of viewing those appearing in court as "injured" in some manner begins to change the landscape of how we view and respond to children and adults who become system-involved. This shift in how we view people in crisis reflects core values of a public health perspective which emphasizes health and well being, and subsequently reframes what responses are likely to be most effective in promoting healing and recovery. (Shawn C. Marsh, Ph.D. and Carly B. Dierkhising, MA, *Avonline and Family Justice Today*, Summer 2013)

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The Problem

The Solution

The Goal

Court Implications

Resources

Trauma Curriculum

Family Court Tool Kit: Trauma and Child Development

Moving toward a trauma-responsive, developmentally-informed court with a foundation in cutting-edge science

Trauma-related news

Click here to see Dr. Vincent Felitti's keynote presentation at the Creating Trauma Informed Systems in Florida Think Tank in Naples, Florida. Dr. Felitti was a co-principal investigator in the landmark epidemiological Adverse Childhood Experiences Study.

An exciting new website from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention provides a free library of photos and videos that illustrate developmental milestones. This resource, entitled [Milestones in Action](#), provides information for children age two months through five years.

Click here for *Red Flags of Trauma*, a quick guide for Judges, developed by Judge Lynn Tepper, Sixth Judicial Circuit.

The Big 10 Transformative Court Practices

Family Court Toolkit. Developed by Florida Office of Court Improvement
<http://www.flcourts.org/resources-and-services/court-improvement/familial-toolkit>

1 Understand trauma and child development.	6 Order screening, assessment, and treatment.
2 Presume trauma.	7 Hold all accountable.
3 Coordinate all cases involving one family.	8 Be a convener.
4 Set expectations for trauma & child development information.	9 Monitor the data.
5 Read the case with a trauma lens.	10 Take care of yourself.


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**With a trauma informed court
there is:**

HOPE A CLEAN SLATE
FORGIVENESS OPPORTUNITY
ENCOURAGEMENT
GENERATIONAL HEALING
FRESH START
SELF ESTEEM

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ACEs affect people at all income and social levels, and can have serious, costly impact across the lifespan. **No one who's experienced significant adversity (or many ACEs) is irreparably damaged**, though we need to acknowledge trauma's effects on their lives. By reducing families' sources of stress, providing children and adults with responsive relationships, and strengthening the core life skills we all need to adapt and thrive, we can prevent and counteract lasting harm.


Center on the Developing Child
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

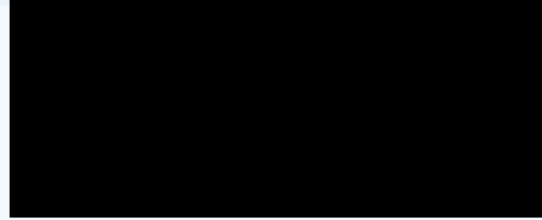
<https://developingchild.harvard.edu/ACEs>
[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

Relationships Buffer ACEs

The single most common factor for children and teens who develop the capacity to overcome serious hardship is having at least one stable and committed relationship with a supportive parent, caregiver, or other adult.



Video clip of Oprah & Dr. Bruce Perry From 60 Minutes



Healing Happens in All Relationships when.....

- Safety is ensured
- Connection happens
- Empathy is present
- Attunement occurs
- New skills are taught & practiced
- There is focus on the positive
- The helpers remain calm, committed, and are also cared for

Vicki Hummer, LCSW, former Director of Training and Outreach, Crisis Center of Tampa Bay
[now with Metropolitan Ministries]

Fostering strong,
responsive relationships
between children and caregivers
can help buffer a child from the effects of
toxic stress.

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How Can You Apply To Youth In Court?

- How you greet/speak to them at each court appearance: Acknowledge appearance, progress, achievements, inquire of them
- Determine *who* the secure adult in their life is and connect them
- Educate diversion program facilitators regarding trauma informed options/referrals
- Consider when balancing VOP vs. reset based upon progress/hurdles
- Consider when setting Conditions of Supervision or Community Service hours:
 - *Topics of research/essays
 - *Outline approved activities that they say they enjoy
 - *Consider the child's positive cultural & ethnic identity
 - *In-home trauma-informed Family Therapy

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The Judge Effect

Empathy and Support are More Effective Than
Sanctions and Threats



- The judge was the single biggest influence on the outcome, with judicial praise, support and other positive attributes translating into fewer crimes and less use of drugs by participants. (Rosenman et al., 2011)
- Positive supportive comments by judge were correlated with few failed drug tests, while negative comments led to the opposite. (Sengco and Leip, 2001)
- The ritual of appearing before a judge and receiving support and accolades, and "tough love" when warranted and reasonable, helped them stick with court-ordered treatment. (Farole and Cissner, 2005, Salei 1998)

Lens, V., "Against the Grain: Therapeutic Judging in a Traditional Court. Law & Social Inquiry." American Bar Association. 2015

What psychological strength is most significant:

**To buffer adversity and stress?
To predict adaptive outcomes?
Can be learned and sustained?**

Chan Hellman, Ph.D., is a professor, quantitative psychologist, and the Director of The Hope Research Center at the University of Oklahoma. He has studied hope and resilience for more than 15 years.

Casey Gwinn, Esq. is the former San Diego City Attorney, a social change advocate, the visionary behind the Family Justice Center movement, and the President of Alliance for HOPE International.

is the single best predictor of well-being
compared to any other measures of trauma
recovery....

Resiliency

Resiliency is the capacity for human beings to thrive in the face of adversity



Resilience does not mean that people 'get over it.' It does mean that the caring people in their lives have a lot of power to buffer, rather than cement, the effects of toxic stress.

Ways To Build Hope and Resilience

- Positive relationships
- Problem solving skills
- Grit, motivation, and persistence
- Self regulation skills
- Positive self view
- Effective stress management
- Faith, spiritual practices, meditation
- Hopeful outlook
- Belief that life has meaning



The key is to identify ways that are likely to work well for you as part of your own personal strategy for fostering resilience.
<http://www.apa.org/index.aspx> American Psychological Association Home // [Psychology Help Center](#) // [The road to resilience](#)

Growth-promoting relationships are based on the child's continuous give-and-take ("serve and return" interaction) **with a human partner** who provides what nothing else in the world can offer –

- **Experiences** that are *individualized to the child's unique personality style*
- **Build on his or her own**
 - **interests**
 - **capabilities**
 - **initiative**
- That shape the **child's self-awareness**
- That **stimulate the growth of his or her heart and mind.**



NATIONAL SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL ON THE DEVELOPING CHILD

NCJFCJ: Ten Things Every Juvenile Court Judge Should Know About Trauma and Delinquency

1. A traumatic experience is an event that threatens life, safety, or well-being.
2. Child traumatic stress can lead to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.
3. Trauma *impacts a child's development and health* throughout life.
4. *Complex trauma* is associated with risk of delinquency.
5. *Traumatic exposure, delinquency, and school failure* are related.

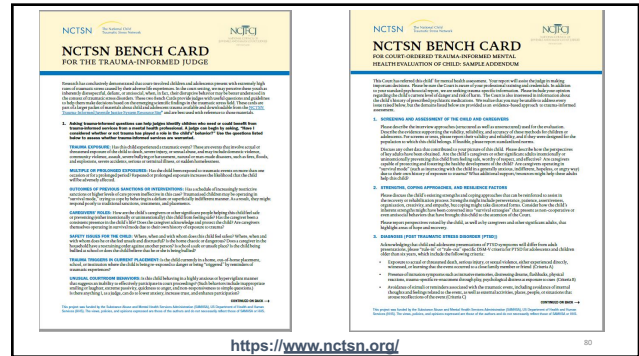
https://www.ncjfcj.org/sites/default/files/trauma%20bulletin_0.pdf

NCJFCJ: Ten Things.....

6. **Trauma assessments** can reduce misdiagnosis, promote positive outcomes, and maximize resources.
7. There are **mental health treatments** that are effective in helping youth who are experiencing child traumatic stress.
8. There is a compelling need for **effective family involvement**.
9. Youth are **resilient**.
10. The juvenile justice **system** needs to be trauma-informed at all levels.

http://www.ncjfcj.org/sites/default/files/trauma%20bulletin_0.pdf

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NCTSN BENCH CARD

Am I sufficiently considering trauma as I decide where this child is going to live and with whom?

- **Placement Outcomes:** How might the various placement options affect this child? Will they help the child feel safe and secure and to successfully recover from traumatic stress or loss?
- **Placement Risks:** Is an out-of-home placement or detention truly necessary? Does the benefit outweigh the potential harm of exposing the child to peers who encourage aggression, substance use, and criminal behavior that may possibly lead to further trauma?
- **Prevention:** If placement, detention or hospitalization is required, what can be done to ensure that the child's traumatic stress responses will not be "triggered"? (For example, if placed in isolation or physical restraints, the child may be reminded of previous traumatic experiences.)
- **Disclosure:** Are there reasons for not informing caregivers or staff at the proposed placement about the child's trauma history? (Will this enhance care or create stigma and re-victimization?)
- **Trauma-Informed Approaches:** How does the programming at the planned placement employ trauma-informed approaches to monitoring, rehabilitation and treatment? Are staff knowledgeable about recognizing and managing traumatic stress reactions? Are they trained to help children cope with their traumatic reactions?
- **Positive Relationships:** How does the planned placement enable the child to maintain continuous relationships with supportive adults, siblings or peers?

Evidence-Informed Therapeutic Interventions for Traumatized Children & Youth

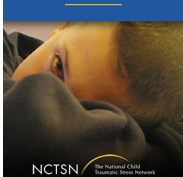


- **National Center for Child Traumatic Stress** (www.NCTSN.org)
 - **Treating Complex Traumatic Stress Disorders in Children & Adolescents (2013)**
 - **National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices** (www.nrepp.samhsa.gov)
 - **Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Programs Model Programs** (www.ojjdp.gov/mpg/Program)
- Reviews of evidence-based therapeutic & rehabilitative interventions for adolescents in delinquency or the juvenile justice system



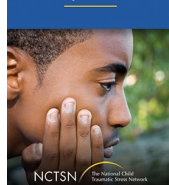
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Screening and Assessment for Trauma in Juvenile Justice



NCTSN RESOURCE
PTSD and Risk Assessments for Juvenile Court Evaluations
Type: Webinar

Complex Trauma



Child Trauma and Opposed Sex: Policy Implications

Abstract of a presentation at the 2014 National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN) Conference, held in San Francisco, California, on October 15-16, 2014. The presentation was given by Dr. David R. Shaffer, Director of the National Child Traumatic Stress Network, and Dr. David R. Shaffer, Director of the National Child Traumatic Stress Network.

How Do Substance Use and Opposed Sex Affect Children, Adolescents, and Families?

There is a growing body of research on the impact of substance use and opposed sex on children, adolescents, and families. This research suggests that substance use and opposed sex can have a significant impact on the mental health of children, adolescents, and families. This research also suggests that substance use and opposed sex can have a significant impact on the physical health of children, adolescents, and families. This research also suggests that substance use and opposed sex can have a significant impact on the social health of children, adolescents, and families.

Substance Use and Opposed Sex: Policy Implications

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Trauma Informed Communities & Systems



Create Opportunities for Learning Be a Convener

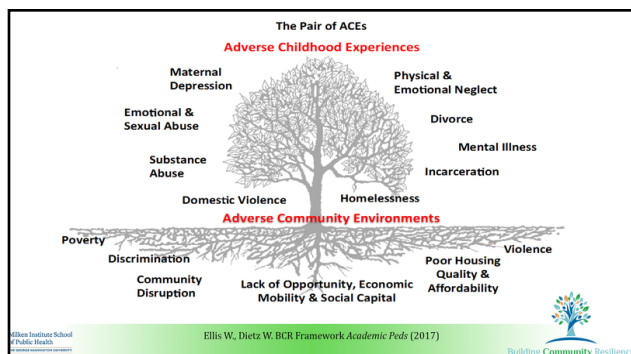
- Partner with local Universities & Colleges
- Partner with local experts
- Host Webinars: National & within your area
- Create a list-serve
- Share materials in Courts, offices, hospitals, classrooms
- Convene meetings to learn of local resources & therapies

THE BIG 10: #4 Set an expectation for trauma & child development info; #8 Be a convener in "Court Implications" Florida Court's Trauma and Child Development Toolkit <http://www.flcourts.org/resources-and-services/court-improvement/judicial-toolkits/family-court-toolkit/>

Essential Topics for in-service

Trauma:

- What is it in the context of each of our systems?
- The impact of trauma on:
 - the children? Emotional & Physical
 - the parents? Substance Abuse & Mental Health
- What part could it play in treatment decisions & future planning?
- What services would benefit a baby or youth or adult with ACEs?
- What impact can it have on compliance or placement?
 - Homelessness & chronic unemployment
 - Disruptions & runaways



Community Partners

- School Resource Officers
- Juvenile Justice Staff
- Detention Staff
- Parents/Foster Parents
- Child Advocacy Centers
- Girls & Boys Club
- Guardian ad litem
- Human Trafficking Advocates & Housing
- Case Managers
- 4-H Clubs
- Veterans Groups
- Early Steps
- Abuse Investigators
- Local Business Community
- Elected Officials
- Children of Inmates
- Colleagues

Community Partners

- Local Law enforcement
- Behavioral Health Programs
- Schools/Teachers/Counselors
- Faith Community
- Therapists
- 12 Step/Support Groups
- Migrant Community
- Domestic/Sexual Violence advocates
- Colleges
- Health Department & Medical Community
- Service Clubs [Women's Club, Rotary]
- Midwife Centers
- Economic Development Council
- Early Learning Centers



We don't need \$\$, we need collaboration

- Rely on *existing* programs
 - Strengthen & refine programs
- Find new partners and programs in your community
- Harness the Positive
- "Build it. They will come."
- Energize
- Share Passion. Share Dreams.



Shifting perspective from "traditional" to this:



Meeting needs builds trust





<https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/what-we-can-do-about-toxic-stress/>

[Florida State University's Center for Prevention and Early Intervention Policy](#)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=81&v=mTx7L9nGgI8&feature=emb_title
[Harvard University's Center on the Developing Child](#)
[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's ACE Study Site](#)
[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Child Development Site](#)
[The Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence](#)
www.safestartcenter.org/cey/index.php
www.ojdo.ncirs.gov
www.search-institute.org/www.ncitsnet.org
[Purple glasses https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TeRab5X3Mkg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TeRab5X3Mkg)

<http://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/judicial-education/>



Resources

SEDNET: <http://www.sednetfl.info/index.aspx>

Trauma & Toxic Stress

Introduction

Save the Date

Save the Date: November 6th-8th, 2019
4th Annual National Institute on Trauma & Stress
Informed Care Conference
For more info: [Click Here](#)

www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/ CDC's latest **Vital Signs** report, examines **associations between ACEs and 14 negative outcomes**. CDC analyzed data from 25 states that included ACE questions from 2015 through 2017 to estimate long-term health and social outcomes in adults that contribute to leading causes of illness and death and reduced access to life opportunities.

CDC works to prevent ACEs and lessen their negative effects. These efforts include:

- Educating states and communities about effective social and economic supports that address financial hardship and other conditions that put families at risk for ACEs.
- Encouraging employers to adopt & support family-friendly policies: paid family leave and flexible work schedules. <https://go.usa.gov/xVa6mexternal icon>
- Increasing access to programs that enhance parents' & youths' skills to handle stress, resolve conflicts, & reduce violence. <https://go.usa.gov/xVQ8sexternal icon>
- Improving school environments to lessen impact of ACEs & prevent further trauma. <https://go.usa.gov/xnY2yexternal icon>
- Educating healthcare providers to recognize current risk in children & ACEs history in adults, & to refer patients to effective family services & support. <https://go.usa.gov/xVa65external icon>

Want to Know Even More?

"Tackling Toxic Stress," a multi-part series of journalistic articles planned and commissioned by the Harvard Center on the Developing Child. Topics include:

- [Pediatricians Take On Toxic Stress](#)
- [Listening to a Baby's Brain: Changing the Pediatric Checkup to Reduce Toxic Stress](#)
- [Innovating in Early Head Start: Can Reducing Toxic Stress Improve Outcomes for Young Children?](#)
- [Using Science to Drive New Approaches to Child Welfare](#)
- [Pushing Toward Breakthroughs: Using Innovative Practice to Address Toxic Stress](#)

Questions?

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ALLIANCE for
HOPE
INTERNATIONAL

Save the Date
May 19-21, 2020
Pre-Conference on May 18

Living a Legacy of **HOPE**

20th Annual International Family Justice Center Conference
in Downtown San Diego, California

Save the Date: Webinar

An Introduction to Survivor
Wealth and Health
with FreeFrom

Tuesday, February 25th
10:00 – 11:30am PT

FREE
FROM



allianceforhope.com

Webinar Download Reminders

- This webinar presentation is being **recorded** and will be posted on our website.
- You will receive an email with instructions on how to download and view all materials and access your **certificate of attendance**.



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Thank You!

Alliance for HOPE International
www.familyjusticecenter.org



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Certificate of Participation

Webinar Training

**Recognizing and Responding to Traumatized Children,
Adolescents, and Adults: What Courts CAN Do and Why**

Judge Lynn Tepper

1.5 Hours

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Casey Gwinn".

Casey Gwinn, J.D.
Co-Founder and President
Alliance for HOPE, International

January 21, 2020

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gael Strack".

Gael Strack, J.D.
Co-Founder and CEO Alliance
for HOPE, International